



**IMPORTANT: Fw: Inside EPA - EPA Exploring New Hybrid Remedy Option
For Key Radioactive Landfill Site**

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EPA Exploring New Hybrid Remedy Option For Key Radioactive Landfill Site

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<http://insideepa.com/201211072415496/EPA-Daily-News/Daily-News/epa-exploring-new-hybrid-remedy-option-for-key-radioactive-landfill-site/menu-id-95.html>

On the advice of its National Remedy Review Board (NRBB) EPA is weighing a new hybrid option for dealing with radioactive waste at a landfill Superfund site near St. Louis that could set a precedent for how the agency deals with such urban radioactive waste sites in the future.

According to a recent Region VII update to local officials, the NRBB urged EPA to explore removing the highest level radioactive material while leaving lower level waste in place and under a cap. In addition to suggesting a new remedy option, the NRRB also requested that Region VII conduct additional testing, including groundwater sampling, EPA's Dan Gravatt told the Bridgeton, MO, City Council Sept. 19. He said the sampling has been conducted, although the samples are still being analyzed.

Region VII began consulting with the NRRB -- an internal peer review group that aims to ensure consistent EPA cleanup decisions nationwide -- earlier this year following public protest over a

Bush-era plan of capping in place and monitoring the waste contaminated with radium-226 at the West Lake Landfill site.

Environmentalists have said the Bush-era cleanup plan of leaving the waste in place would set a dangerous precedent for leaving radioactive waste at urban Superfund sites at levels above the agency's traditional limits and set a precedent of allowing nuclear waste disposal at urban landfills not regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. An EPA spokesman has disputed critics' characterization of the area as "urban," saying the landfill is in an "industrial/suburban" area, adjacent to an industrial park and an airport.

Last year, an agency-mandated study came up with two alternatives to the Bush-era plan -- excavating the waste and disposing of it off-site or moving the waste to an on-site disposal cell with a liner and cap, provided a suitable location could be found. But the supplemental feasibility study suggested the Bush-era plan should remain in place, as alternatives would be more costly and technically difficult to implement.

But the NRRB said EPA should consider an additional option where EPA would set a threshold concentration and then remove waste above that radiation level while capping the rest in place, Gravatt said. EPA officials considered that possibility during its Bush-era deliberations, Gravatt said, but put it aside and focused more on either removing the radioactive contamination entirely or leaving it in place under a cap.

During his presentation to the city council, Gravatt said radiation at the landfill is in two cells -- one 30 acres and another 10 acres -- and at depths varying from surface level to 50 feet. Part of the reason for EPA's past proposal of leaving the waste in place is that its removal would stir up dust, creating health risks for workers on site, and during transportation off site, he said.

The radioactive contamination at the landfill's surface is mixed with soil, making it less mobile, Gravatt said, though the material is still not being stored as it should. The St. Louis Airport Authority has opposed removing the waste, Gravatt said, because of concerns the work would attract birds that could get sucked into jet engines.